Executive Summary

Sound Transit Capital Program

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

University Link opening

U.S. Senator Patty Murray joined Sound Transit officials to announce that University Link train service will open six to nine months earlier than the scheduled date of September 2016. The new opening is anticipated in the first quarter of 2016, with the exact date still undetermined.

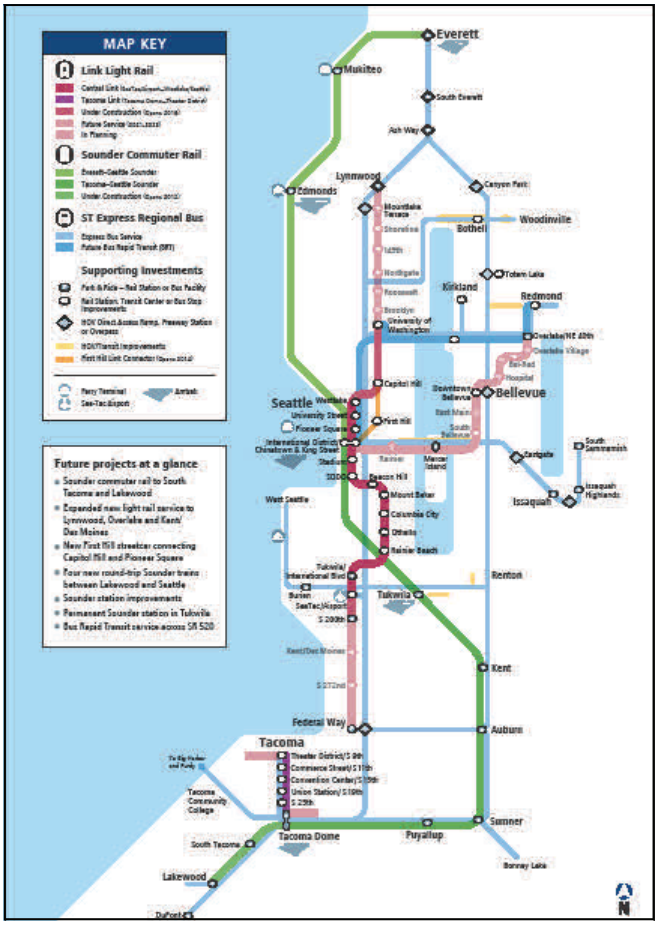
Construction on the project is going well; trending at $107 million under budget, has over five months of float in the schedule, and the agency is able to shorten the testing time before launch. In addition, the construction phases that posed the highest risk to the original schedule–the twin tunnel mining and station excavation–are complete.

The new opening date is possible without additional costs.

2014 budget approved

The Sound Transit Board approved the 2014 budget of $1.1 billion that contains funding for several major projects, including the start of tunnel work on the Northgate Link Extension and continued construction on the Tukwila Sounder station and the South 200th light rail extension.

The 2014 budget also has $221 million for service delivery to carry an expected 31 million riders on Sound Transit trains and buses.



Current and future transit improvements

New Board officers

The Sound Transit Board unanimously approved its 2014 leadership positions for the next two years beginning January 1, 2014.

Dow Constantine, King County Executive, is the new Board Chair replacing Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive. Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember and Marilyn Strickland, Tacoma Mayor, will serve as Board Vice Chairs.

Board members Julia Patterson, Richard Conlin and Mike McGinn left the Board in December.

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues *continued . . .*

Federal Way Link Extension

The Sound Transit Board identified the Federal Way Link Extension route and station alternatives for study in a draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Federal Way project will extend light rail from the future Angle Lake Station at South 200th in SeaTac, which is under construction, to Kent/Des Moines by 2023.

Rail~Volution success

Sound Transit was host agency for the 2013 Rail~Volution conference; this year's theme "New Frontier," had more than 1,400 attending the national conference in Seattle this fall, making it the largest turnout in the 19-year history of the conference.

Sound Transit staff and other volunteers provided workshop tours and assisted in putting the conference together.

Microsoft agreement

The Sound Transit Board approved an agreement between Sound Transit, the City of Redmond and the Microsoft Corporation for enhancements to the future upgrade of the Overlake Transit Center.

Under the East Link Extension, the transit center in Redmond will be rebuilt to accommodate light rail, an expanded park-and-ride, and improved bus facilities. Microsoft will pay Sound Transit $33.3 million to fund additional improvements including a pedestrian-bicycle bridge, increased canopy coverage, additional conduit for future technology enhancements, and facilities for Microsoft Transportation Services.

East Link construction is targeted to begin in 2015 with trains running in 2023.

Lynnwood Link route

The Sound Transit Board identified the preferred route and station options to extend light rail from the Northgate Mall area north to Lynnwood. The 8.5-mile preferred route will mostly run adjacent to Interstate 5 with stations in the Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood areas.

Sound Transit will advance engineering work on the preferred alignment as it completes a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and will continue to study additional stations in north Seattle and Mountlake Terrace. The Board will make a final decision on the project to be built after the FEIS is published in 2015.

COP Report

Sound Transit's independent Citizen Oversight Panel (COP) presented its Year 16 report to the Sound Transit Board. The report, which highlights the agency's last eight years of performance, gives Sound Transit good overall marks.

The COP report also noted areas of improvement, including regional coordination among transit providers, responding to increasing service demand, and continuing efforts to control operating costs.

Mudslides prevention

Sound Transit is supporting the work of the Department of Transportation and BNSF Railway Co., which owns the tracks along the Sounder north line between Everett and Seattle.

Using a $16 million federal grant, BNSF recently completed a 700-foot-long 10-foot-high slope retaining wall north of Mukilteo and a 200-foot-long wall north of Edmonds. Other slide-prone areas will see improvements in the future.

The agencies are also continuing to assist local jurisdictions as they educate property owners along the corridor about slope management and the proper disposal of vegetation and debris.